

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-9 (canceled).

Claim 10 (original): A method, comprising:

fusing a pellicle to a frame at a first seam between the pellicle and the frame; and
attaching the frame to a reticle.

Claim 11 (original): The method of claim 10, wherein:

said attaching the frame comprises fusing the frame to the reticle.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 11, wherein:

said fusing the pellicle to the frame occurs approximately concurrently with said
fusing the frame to the reticle.

Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 10, wherein:

said fusing the pellicle to the frame occurs before said attaching the frame to the
reticle.

Claim 14 (original): The method of claim 10, wherein:

said fusing the pellicle to the frame occurs after said attaching the frame to the
reticle.

Claim 15 (original): The method of claim 10, wherein:

fusing the pellicle to the frame comprises using a laser beam.

Claim 16 (original): The method of claim 15, wherein:

said using the laser beam comprises using an infrared laser beam.

Claim 17 (original): The method of claim 16, wherein:

said infrared laser beam is produced by a CO₂ laser.

Claim 18 (withdrawn): A system, comprising:

a support to hold a pellicle and frame in place for a fusion attachment between
the pellicle and the frame;

a laser device to fuse the pellicle to the frame;

a structure to position a first seam between the pellicle and the frame in a path of
a laser beam from the laser device; and

a control device to move at least one of the pellicle and the laser relative to one
another to move at least a part of the first seam through the path of the
laser beam.

Claim 19 (withdrawn): The system of claim 18, wherein:

the support is further to hold the frame and a reticle in place for attachment to
one another.

Claim 20 (withdrawn): The system of claim 18, wherein:

the control device is to move at least one of the pellicle and the laser relative to
one another to move all of the first seam through the path of the laser
beam.

Claim 21 (withdrawn): The system of claim 18, wherein:

the laser device comprises a CO₂ laser.

Claim 22 (withdrawn): The system of claim 18, wherein:

the support is further to hold the reticle and the frame in place for fusion
attachment to one another;

the laser device is further to fuse the frame to the reticle;
the structure is further to position a second seam between the frame and the
reticle in the path of the laser beam from the laser device; and
the control device is further to move at least one of the reticle and the laser
device relative to one another to move at least a part of the second seam
through the path of the laser beam.

Claim 23 (new): The method of claim 10, wherein fusing the pellicle to the frame
comprises:

heating a first portion of the pellicle and a second portion of the frame to cause
the first and second portions to melt and fuse together; and
cooling the melted first and second portions to form a combined solidified third
portion that includes material from both the first and second portions.

Claim 24 (new): The method of claim 23, wherein the third portion contains
substantially no material that was not in the first portion of the pellicle and the
second portion of the frame.

Claim 25 (new): The method of claim 23, wherein heating the first and second portions
comprises heating the first and second portions above about 1700 degrees
Celsius.

Claim 26 (new): The method of claim 23, wherein the first portion of the pellicle
comprises a volume of the pellicle around at least a portion of a perimeter of the
pellicle.

Claim 27 (new): The method of claim 26, wherein the first portion of the pellicle
comprises a continuous volume around the perimeter of the pellicle.

Claim 28 (new): The method of claim 23, wherein the pellicle, the frame, and the third portion all consist of substantially the same material.

Claim 29 (new): The method of claim 23, wherein there are substantially no physical differences between material of the pellicle, the frame, and the third portion.

Claim 30 (new): The method of claim 23, wherein no adhesive is used to attach the pellicle to the frame.

Claim 31 (new): The method of claim 23, wherein attaching the frame to the reticle comprises:

heating a fourth portion of the frame and a fifth portion of the reticle to cause the fourth and fifth portions to melt and fuse together; and
cooling the melted fourth and fifth portions to form a combined solidified sixth portion that includes material from both the fourth and fifth portions.

Claim 32 (new): A method, comprising:

positioning a top surface of a frame to contact a bottom surface of a pellicle; and
fusing the frame to the pellicle to form a single physical fused frame-pellicle from the separate frame and pellicle.

Claim 33 (new): The method of claim 32, wherein fusing the frame to the pellicle comprises:

heating a first portion of the pellicle in contact with the frame and a second portion of the frame in contact with the pellicle to cause the first and second portions to melt and fuse together; and
cooling the melted first and second portions to form a combined solidified third portion that includes material from both the first and second portions.

Claim 34 (new): The method of claim 33, wherein, after fusing the frame to the pellicle, a portion of the top surface of the frame remains in contact with and not fused to a portion of the bottom surface of the pellicle.

Claim 35 (new): The method of claim 33, wherein the frame comprises a plurality of perimeter portions that define an interior window through the frame, and an outer portion of the perimeter portions is fused to the pellicle.

Claim 36 (new): The method of claim 35, wherein the outer portion of the perimeter portions fused to the pellicle comprises a continuous fused portion around a perimeter of the fused frame-pellicle.

Claim 37 (new): The method of claim 33, wherein the fused frame-pellicle, including the third portion, comprises a material that is substantially uniform throughout the fused frame-pellicle.

Claim 38 (new): The method of claim 33, wherein there are substantially no physical differences between material of the pellicle, the frame, and the third portion.

Claim 39 (new): The method of claim 33, wherein no adhesive is used to attach the pellicle to the frame.

Claim 40 (new): The method of claim 32, wherein attaching the frame to the reticle comprises:

positioning a bottom surface of the frame to contact a top surface of a reticle; and

fusing the frame to the reticle to form a single physical fused reticle-frame-pellicle from the separate reticle, frame, and pellicle.